

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 10, 1898, with transcript

Letter from Mrs Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. May 10, 1898. My darling Alec:

I received your and Lina's telegrams this evening within an hour of the time you must have sent them. I am glad that Beinn Bhreagh gave you and Mr and Mrs Bell such a fine welcome, it must have pleased your guests. I hope the house also was in order and comfortable. I hate having people in my house without my being there, but I am glad that you have company.

I must tell you of the Cuban "lecture" at the Geographic this afternoon. Mr. Quesada dropped out at the last moment on telegraphic order from his Chief, so only Mr. Curtis and Col. Rilder were left. The hall was hung with bunting, whether especially for us or not I know not. Mr Curtis' lecture was very good. Mr. Hilder's so far as I could judge from what Elsie told me was rather a re chauff le of the last Consular report illustrated by 3 Government charts and eked out with a lot of spread-eagleism which we could have done without. I was tired and disgusted that Elsie had dragged me there to see the picture and all that materialized were those three charts. Mr. Hilder collected his papers and was retiring across the stage when the last chart faded away and in big letters filling the white lantern sheet appeared, "My Country tis of Thee" the whole verses of it. A boy came on the stage and started the singing and all the large audience got on it's feet and began singing the hymn. Presently when we got to the part about the pilgrims the verses faded away and a picture of the early settlers desperately fighting the Indians appeared. This too faded away and the verses reappeared and we sang on to the "Rocks" when a picture of the Grand Canon appeared, followed by more verses and then the Rocky Mountains, verse again, then a highly colored enormous 2 Cuban flag was thrown on the screen. This

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too faded, the verses returned until just at the close a brilliant gigantic figure of Columbia waving the stars and stripes appeared and the audience closed in a peal of applause. What do you think of this? Mr. McGee said it was all Mr. Murray's doing quite extempore.

I will telegraph to you all war news. Mr Kennan's movements still uncertain. It is still unusually cold. Your Uncle and Aunt dined with us this evening and played whist. Elsie received a magnificent present of a dozen enormous American Beauties stems a yard long and a dozen moss roses from Mr. Powell the young Naval Officer.

Much love, Your, Mabel.